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PHOTO: SHARON KABIKA

Nurse midwife Iddi Mlendela Mashaka examining a pregnant woman at the Nyasho Health Centre, Musoma.

## MUSOMA MOTHERS IN PEACE OF MIND, HAIL AFYA ENDELEVU

A timely deployment of additional Human Resources for Health (HRH) at Nyasho Health Centre in Musoma Municipality of the Mara Region since the final quarter of the year 2020, brought a huge relief to expectant mothers who were running short of quality maternal services. The deployment of just four midwives made a huge difference in maternal health services.

None of the expectant mothers around Nyasho was confident to deliver a baby in the most convenient and safest way until Afya Endelevu Activity made this conspicuous intervention.

Located in North West Tanzania, Mara is one of the 16 Regions of the country that has Health Centres currently benefit from the USAID Afya Endelevu project, which addresses Human Resources for Health (HRH) shortfalls, an activity kindly supported by the

United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for five years since February 2020.

The activity is seriously dedicated to developing sustainable approaches to HRH recruitment, deployment and management with the objective of supporting the delivery of high-quality Services for HIV, TB, and Reproductive Maternal and Child Health (RMCH) at health facilities that run short of it.

“Before the arrival of these nurses, we were never sure of securing services of this quality here. Several times in the past we would be referred to the regional hospital even for minor complications. Nowadays things have significantly changed, we come here with great confidence and rest assured of quality, hassle-free and reliable services from the nurses,”

said Mrs. Kadogo Mataluma a 38-year old lady.

In mid-October this year, Mrs. Mataluma became a mother of nine having safely delivered twins courtesy of great help from Iddi Mlendela Mashaka who was the nurse in charge since her arrival a day before.

Nurse midwife Iddi Mlendela says that upon Mrs. Mataluma's arrival, he initially checked her thoroughly and everything looked well in the labor room before shortly later the situation abruptly changed into delivery complications. Iddi and his team thought a Caesarian-Section would be the next available option but a further observation brought a suggestion that could help her give natural birth to escape surgery.

Had this situation happened before the deployment of Iddi and the other three nurses by the USAID Afya Endelevu Project, then Mrs. Mataluma would have been referred to the Musoma Regional Hospital. "The number of referrals has been diminishing at exponential decreasing function," so says the Medical Officer In-charge (MOI) of Nyasho Health Centre Mr. Emmanuel Robert Shani.

"Most of the deliveries here are natural and even the C-Section has sufficient and reliable staff with facilities to handle any incoming emergency with an incredible ease, we advance our in-depth appreciation to the USAID Afya Endelevu Project", says Mr. Shani.

"Early this year we received four nurses, two enrolled and the rest registered nurses. This has brought tremendous change and great impact to the services of our health center. For example between October – December 2020 we had 594 normal deliveries and 28 C-Sections, fast forward to the July - September period this year we have 711 normal deliveries and 79 C-Sections. To us, this has been a success",

he said the Nyasho MOI.

"I am very grateful that these nurses were here today, otherwise, I would have opted for a Caesarian section or referral to the regional hospital. They saved my life and that of my babies, I thank them from the bottom of my heart,"

Mrs. Mataluma a healthy and happy mother said while gazing at her newborns.

The registered nurse in charge of Nyasho Health Centre Modester Peter Oguda says that these four nurses have been a relief especially when it comes to roster management. She says that now they have better roster management thanks to the added staff. In her own words, she says

"We've endured a torrid moment in our facility, but ever since USAID Afya Endelevu Project powered this intervention we have successfully crossed over beyond the much-needed safety line barrier. Now we can even conduct deliveries with confidence, great composure and huge peace of mind based on the fact that we have competent, skillful and enough staff to contain that task,"

The USAID Afya Endelevu Activity has made a big and meaningful difference in terms of maternal health services improvement and state-of-the-art facilities to inspire expectant mothers across the entire Nyasho Health Centre proximity. The BMF implementing the activity has really added a huge boost to the well-being of expectant mothers around Nyasho as well as providing peace of mind to their husbands culminating in healthy living.

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